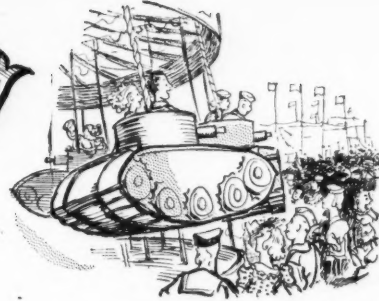


# PUNCH

OR THE  
LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCI No. 5241

August 20 1941

## Charivaria

THE Germans complained that when their loud-speakers on the Eastern Front broadcast propaganda they drew Russian artillery fire. What did they expect? Fan mail?

Two months ago Herr HITLER said his armies would sweep through Russia or he would know the reason why. Now he knows the reason why.

They are also said to have used loud-speakers to make small guns sound like big ones. This of course does not mean that the Germans do not use their big guns. GOERING, it is believed, has already been fired.

We understand that owing to the unfortunate shortage of soft fruits, thousands of housewives throughout the country are being compelled to preserve their extra sugar without it.



"The cleverest men are the most modest," says a writer. H'm; we wonder how many members of the Brains Trust don't listen to the recorded version of the Brains Trust programme broadcast the following day.

New ties for men are the colour of boiled spinach. A correspondent suggests that this is the very best way to use boiled spinach.

"In some respects the FUEHRER is like NAPOLEON," says a Berlin newspaper. Nonsense! NAPOLEON never rode his white horse standing up.



Owing to contradictory statements in the Nazi official communiques regarding the nationality of enemy airmen over Berlin, citizens don't know what to think. Dr. GOEBBELS may be forced to classify *all* raids over the capital as thunderstorms.

"COOK-HOUSEKEEPER, all duties; daily morning help; two in family; small convenient house; man outside."

*Advt. in "The Times."*

Ask him in, Cook; ask him in.

"To Mr. & Mrs. W——. I apologise for the statements I have made about you both, and in the near future I shall not repeat any such remarks. ADA B——."—*Advt. in Staffs Paper.*

But after that—look out!

A magazine writer explains that Dr. GOEBBELS was one of a family of seven. Then why didn't they keep one of the pretty ones instead?



## This is in Praise . . .

THIS is in praise of the man who never  
 Feels too much elated or too much depressed  
 But just keeps rolling along like old man river  
 Whatever is happening in the East or in the West.  
 Foul weather or fine  
 Blow soft wind or hurricane  
 He takes a calm line  
 About every new speech, be it German, our own or  
 American.  
 At each pincer movement  
 On Suez, on Dakar, on India, on Iran, on Penge or  
 New York  
 He trusts to the Government,  
 Works, doesn't talk,  
 Blacks out all his windows  
 Till never a chink  
 Leaves a chance for the wandering warden's absurd  
 innuendoes.  
 "They are blacker, old man, they are blacker, much  
 blacker, than ink."  
 He never has hoarded  
 Anything under the sun  
 But obeys all the careful instructions so splendidly worded  
 Of a thousand officials and one.  
 He digs  
 All Saturday afternoon.  
 He never gets eggs  
 But he thinks he will have one quite soon.  
 And he does not travel  
 Nor stand in long queues.  
 The thought of a holiday strikes him as sent from the devil,  
 And eight times a day he submits to the wireless to hear  
 the new news.  
 Very light is his intake of liquor  
 But all that he gets  
 He consumes in the hope it may possibly help the Exchequer,  
 And the same when he smokes cigarettes;  
 He carries his gas-mask  
 And if there's a practice alarm  
 It is on in a moment and lends to his face, like a yashmak,  
 Mystery, music and charm.  
 All night on the roof-top he watches  
 Lest fire should fall down out of heaven.  
 In the morning he sings like a bird in his bath and then  
 catches  
 The 8.57.  
 He needs a few coupons  
 To buy him a fresh pair of boots  
 But if he should fail to preserve them he doesn't care  
 twopence—  
 I mean, not two hoots.

\* \* \* \* \*

But I don't think I want to go on with this portrait I've  
 painted.  
 This Cromwell, this Hampden, this prop and support of  
 the war,  
 He makes all my rhymes and my lines so absurdly  
 disjointed.  
 I find him a bore.  
 But I do want to point out the way that he kept from  
 his fellows  
 With a countenance gay but grim  
 The news of that glorious rendezvous over the billows  
 (Which they knew about—just like him). EVOE.

## Interviews in Africa

(Accurately translated)

### The Gardener

THE garden slept in the sun of a tropical afternoon.  
 Immense bees buzzed; a locust or two banded about  
 with vague abandon. A. (for Administrator) emerged  
 from his house, sodden with (though not refreshed by)  
 sleep, and viewed the scene with disfavour. Grass inter-  
 mingled itself gracefully with petunias long since run to  
 seed, the mowing-machine stood upside-down against the  
 trunk of a eucalyptus tree; inexplicably there was a huge  
 mound of earth and oranges in the carriage sweep.

A. shouted "Mohammed!" for this charmingly casual  
 disorder did not commend itself to him. There was no  
 response. A locust hit him sharply on the back of the  
 neck. He jumped. "Ya—Mohammed!" he yelled in a frenzy.

The garden slept on. A vulture sat down upon the  
 mowing-machine and extinguished it. A. ended a long  
 search by finding his gardener deeply asleep under an  
 oleander bush. He woke him with thinly-veiled fury, and  
 exclaimed "What do you think you have been doing?"

Mohammed looked surprised. He considered.

"I think," he said, "I have been partially asleep under  
 an oleander bush."

"And what," said A. between his teeth, "do you imagine  
 I pay you for?"

Mohammed, who slightly misheard the question, answered  
 with pleasure, "You pay me two hundred and fifty piastres  
 a month."

"I am asking you what I pay you for," said A. intensely.  
 "For, for, for!"

The gardener looked a little vague.

"Those are my wages," he explained, "as your Excellency  
 agreed upon. But you pay me at the end of the month,  
 which is yet another week," he ended, with generosity.

"I pay you to work!" said A., and his voice escaped  
 slightly from his iron control.

"Ah!" said Mohammed patiently, as light dawned upon  
 him, "that also is understood, your Excellency. To work  
 in your garden."

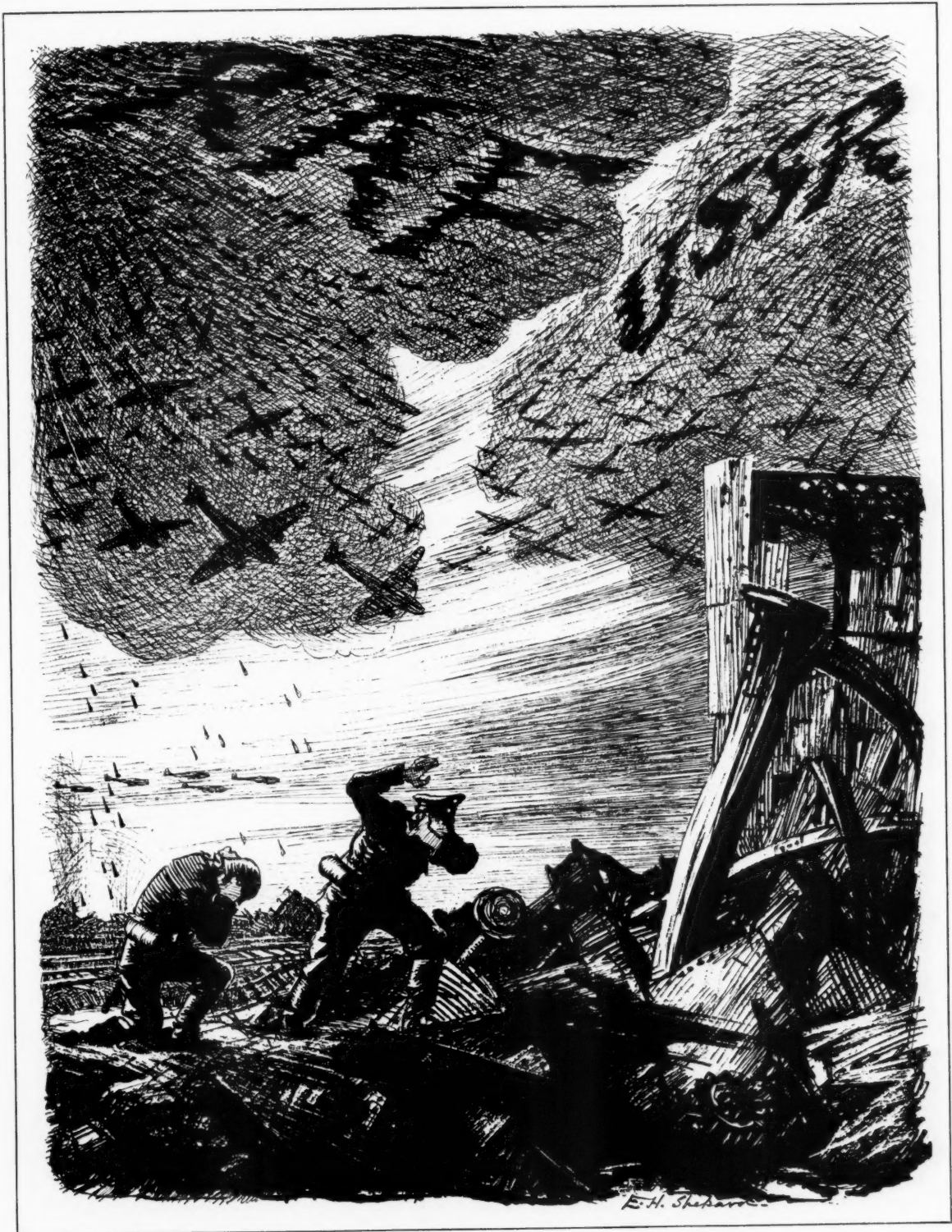
"And you do not work! You do nothing! You are the  
 laziest man in my pay!"

Although Mohammed was not sure whether he was  
 supposed actually to show outward signs of appreciation  
 at these ridiculous misstatements, he permitted himself  
 a faint smile.

"Why is the mowing-machine upside-down? Oranges on  
 the drive? The jasmine over-watered? The mohur not  
 watered at all? If you do not pull yourself together and  
 work properly I shall sack you. If you do not put the  
 garden straight this afternoon I shall cut your pay."

Returning to the house A. said "I've fixed the gardener."

The mention of pay struck a chord. Mohammed thought  
 it might be worth while taking action. He went across  
 to the mowing-machine. The vulture was reluctant to  
 leave his perch, but after a while dismounted. Mohammed,  
 tiresome and exhausting as it seemed to him to be, went so  
 far as to turn the mowing-machine the right way up. The  
 English, curious as they were, could offer him no criticism  
 now that he had worked. Luckily the eucalyptus tree  
 provided almost as good a shade as the oleander bush, so  
 that it was not necessary to walk back again. He lay  
 down and instantly continued his sleep. The garden—  
 temporarily disturbed by the caprices of a foreign  
 administration—slept on.



THE TWO-FOLD NIGHT





Sillence

*"To be frank with you, Madame Nina, we're anxious to know the military situation in Russia."*

### Star-Stuff

**"TAKE things quietly until next Saturday."** Nice advice," said my poor friend Poker, M.P., "for Sunday, August 10th, 1941.

"When I found that, I had read nearly all the lectures in all the Sunday papers: and I was in that mood of combined depression and exaltation that comes over all of us after a few minutes with the Sunday papers.

"I had been told by the military experts that while on the one hand the Germans had not got to Moscow, they might easily turn right, march through Turkey, mop up the Caucasus, bag the Russians' oil, trot on to Iran and Iraq and bag ours. I had been told that I was to be ready for an invasion by twenty-one days, that I was not

building enough tanks and planes, and must not relax for a moment. I had been told by the leader-writers that I must not be excessively optimistic, complacent, slack or over-confident. I was thoroughly keyed-up for a week of unremitting effort. Then I turned to the hired astrologer of one of the same sheets and I read with some astonishment these burning words:

**"Take things quietly until next Saturday."**

"It is true that these words were not addressed to the whole population. They were addressed to a section only. But they were addressed to me, for I am one of those who was born under Gemini (May 21-June 20). I do not know how many of the people were

born in those four weeks. But there may be millions of them—millions who are making tanks, or aircraft, studying a new trade, learning to shoot or fly. And to all of them that is the only advice which this particular star-man has to offer.

**"Take things quietly until next Saturday."**

"There are other star-men, of course. Indeed, there is one star-girl, and her message to the sons and daughters of Gemini is a little more inspiring. She says:

**"Life has its surprises and excitements for you. Fortunately the most important of these will be in your favour. On Friday, play for safety."**

"But the other chap wants me to



play for safety on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday as well. What am I to do?

"A little less confident and keyed-up than I had been, I turned to the star-boy of the Sunday P—. The leading articles in this paper are modestly described as 'The Voice of the People.' No paper contains so many stern lectures about not relaxing; no paper is so severe on those who do; no paper watches so carefully the behaviour of the 'upper classes.' On this Sunday it had a disturbing headline: 'PLAY-GIRLS IDLE WHILE THEIR MEN FACE DEATH.' Here, at least, I thought, the star-man's advice would be as dynamic as the leader-writer's. But no. Here is what I found:

"*Gemini (May 21-June 20). A week of social gatherings; friends are coming and going. Short journeys are imminent, while letters and telephone-calls are more numerous than ever.*"

"Not a word about work, you notice. Pure play-girlery is the programme.

"It is true that other citizens receive more warming words—those, for example, who were born under Scorpio (October 24—November 22). These are told:

"*Make this a week for all-out effort and leave the rest to the stars—they are with you.*"

"But this was August 11—three weeks before the invasion date: and the message of the whole of the rest of the paper, quite rightly, was that this and all the weeks should be weeks of all-out effort for everyone.

"Is this good editing?"

"Is it good 'war-effort'?"

"Mr. L—, of the P—, seems to be even more dangerous to the war-effort. Here are some extracts from his 'birthday indications,' headed 'How We All Stand This Week':

"April 21—May 20. . . . Friday excellent for making decisions.

May 21—June 20. Best opportunities at end of week . . .

Aug. 22—Sept. 22. As week lengthens, outlook brightens . . .

Sept. 23—Oct. 22. Decisions should be left until Friday . . .

Dec. 21—Jan. 19. Some improvement round about Friday.

Jan. 20—Feb. 18. . . . don't be in too much hurry in the early stages.

Feb. 19—March 20. Adopt philosophical attitude and wait till Friday before attempting to push ahead."

"Seven months. Seven-twelfths of the people, therefore, are encouraged by the stars to think most of Friday or the week-end.

"Four of the five remaining 'month-groups' are to be 'Tuesday-minded':

"June 21—July 20. Tuesday easily most helpful day this week . . .

July 21—Aug. 21. Attention should be focused on Tuesday . . .

Oct. 23—Nov. 22. Highly progressive week, with Tuesday marking peak-point of opportunity.

Nov. 23—Dec. 26. Advantages on Tuesday and Thursday . . ."

"Only the happy citizens born between March 21 and April 20, it seems, have any real inducement to stick it all the week:

"*No signs of hitches this side of Saturday.*"

"Though even they may be a little damped by the star-girl, who says:

"*In spite of an upset early in the week you will lose none of your enthusiasm and confidence.*"

"You may say, as people do, that all this is nonsense which nobody takes seriously. That is not my information. I am told that an increasing number of foolish citizens do take this stuff seriously, and that many (not women only) buy their Sunday sheets not for the quality of the news or editorial pages but because they 'believe' in this or that star-merchant.

"They would not take it quite so seriously perhaps if they bought all the Sunday papers, as I do, and studied all the astrologers. Look at this little table I prepared last Sunday. All the predictions in the left-hand column are taken from the *Sunday D—*; and all those in the right-hand column are from the *Sunday C—* (except the one marked \* which is from the *Sunday P—*) all of August 10, 1941.

LEO (July 24—Aug. 23)

"A highly favour- | "Not a good week." able week."

CAPRICORN (Dec. 23—Jan. 20)

"A quiet week." | "A very active week is indicated."

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21—Feb. 18)

"Outlook excellent | "Not too good a for the majority." week."

CANCER (June 21—July 23)

"An average week." | "A week of opportunity. Excitement abounds."

"Now, I do not understand the language of the stars. But the question is, do the astrologers? When 'The Colonel' gives 'Love Lies Bleeding,' for the 3.30, and 'The Major' gives 'Broth of a Boy,' and 'Mary Rose' wins, no one is surprised or censorious: for no one but an ass expects race-horses to behave consistently. But the stars, surely, at any given moment, are the same for everybody, like the

moon and sun. No one would be listened to, for example, who came out with a completely new and different set of tables for sunrise or High Water, Dover. Accordingly, if *The Sun* says that this is a 'favourable' week for December babies, and *The Wizard* says it is a bad one, there must be either incompetence or trickery somewhere.

"Which is it?"

"Someone told me that the thing was raised in the Courts some years ago, and somebody or other came to the conclusion that such predictions did not amount to illegal 'professing to tell fortunes' because they were not 'addressed to individuals.'

"That interests me rather, when I read the heading to the star-girl's birthday stuff:

"YOUR OWN HOROSCOPE

*Under your birth-date this week you will find a forecast of the trend of events in your life this week . . .*

"Well, well. I put down a Question before the House rose; but it was in the wrong form or something, and I shall have to wait.

"Then, of course, there are all the general 'predictions' about the war, about Hitler, Roosevelt and everybody else. These, I suppose, don't influence individual actions so much as the 'horoscopes'; but they may be cunningly used to create confidence. You make a number of vague statements, any one of which might mean a dozen things: and then, when one thing happens that fits in anywhere, you yell 'I told you so!' and forget about the others. And here," said Poker, "there's a rather serious point.

"At this moment I happen to know—or think I know—of a certain 'dramatic event,' the news of which, for good reasons, has not yet been 'released.' The newspapers undoubtedly know about it too. And I notice, in three or four of the star-corners to-day, phrases which will easily cover the event, and have, in my belief, been deliberately put in so that next week the star-man may be able to say: 'What did I tell you?'

"Now, if I were right—that is, if any newspaper could be proved to have pretended to its credulous readers that its astrologer had deduced from the stars an event of which they had confidential information from the Government—then, well, I do not think I need go on. But I am filing all the star-boys weekly and I am watching, I warn them.

"Anyhow, for goodness' sake, take things quietly until next Saturday."

A. P. H.

## At the Pictures

## EMMA AND JEANNIE

"Of course it's a beautiful film, beautifully photographed and everything," I heard one old lady say to another as they left after seeing *Lady Hamilton* (Director: ALEXANDER KORDA), "but it's ridiculous!" They both agreed that it was ridiculous, but I don't know exactly what they meant. To me it seemed a straightforward piece enough, based without much extravagance largely on fact and quite unprovocative of such language. I suspect that their protest was prompted by the resentment of the unimaginative at the attribution of human and indeed hardly respectable emotions to people they had always thought of as Historical Characters, living bloodlessly on a high plane—or anyway safely dead. But NELSON and EMMA HAMILTON must, after all, have experienced such emotions, and that makes them the films' legitimate prey. This film is an account of the celebrated Affair, mostly from *Emma's* standpoint—the narrative is so arranged as to be told by herself. Old and ugly in a Calais jail, she explains how it all happened, beginning with her arrival as a girl at the house of *Sir William Hamilton*, British Ambassador in Naples. Yes, it is all straightforward and conscientiously done, by no means "ridiculous." I wouldn't call it "beautiful" either, but there are several memorable scenes, including the Battle of Trafalgar; LAURENCE OLIVIER is a good *Nelson*, and his death scene in particular is highly impressive. VIVIEN LEIGH is, I suppose, quite miscast as *Emma*, but she is good enough to make one forget

this. A minor point that sticks in my mind is the unaccustomed bouncing, skipping rhythm the supposedly British sailors (the film was made in Hollywood) give to the song "Heart of Oak."

(While we're on the subject of

one about the right way to take off a gas-mask—and still, merely because you are six thousand miles away, be utterly, fatally, fantastically, comically wrong about atmosphere and mood.)

Even those inclined to resent the deliberately "charming" should find *Jeannie* (Director: HAROLD FRENCH) a pleasant trifle, although it is probably the most undeniable Cinderella-story since *Cinderella*. This is an adaptation of the play, with the same girl, BARBARA MULLEN, in the principal part. All is foreseeable exactly; but the humorous situation of the poor little girl introduced to surroundings of wealth, of the careful manager confronted with universal extravagance, has never been more efficiently "milked." The cynical trade phrase seems unjust as a description of the no doubt entirely sincere performance of Miss MULLEN—and indeed it is her sincerity that saves the whole affair, for most of the other excellent players in the piece have type-parts and are there merely to surround her. They include WILFRID LAWSON as her miserly and oppressive father, ALBERT LIEVEN as the false Prince Charming, and MICHAEL REDGRAVE as the real one, the lavish inventor of a washing-machine.

*High Sierra* (Director: RAOUL WALSH) presents HUMPHREY BOGART as the (more or less) last gangster—and the wheel has come full circle, for as in the early days of gangster pictures we are made to feel something like sympathy for him. But it is emphasized that there is almost nobody left in his class. *Big Mac* (DONALD MACBRIDE), arranging a hold-up, says to him sadly "If I had four guys like you this knockover would be a waltz. Times have sure changed." R. M.



J. H. D.

[Lady Hamilton]

## SOCIAL OCCASIONS—I

Sir William Hamilton . . . . .	ALAN MOWBRAY
Mrs. Cadogan . . . . .	SARA ALLGOOD
Lord Nelson . . . . .	LAURENCE OLIVIER



J. H. D.

[Jeannie]

## SOCIAL OCCASIONS—II

Stanley Smith . . . . .	MICHAEL REDGRAVE
Jeannie . . . . .	BARBARA MULLEN
Count Erich von Wittgenstein . . . . .	ALBERT LIEVEN

American pictures of British life let me mention in parenthesis *One Night in Lisbon* (Director: EDWARD H. GRIFFITH). Much of this is set in wartime London, and it is notable chiefly as an example of how you can get a great many of the details right—except that

## Going Up?

**M**Y DEAR MAJOR,—I almost addressed you in the casual way in which one writes to captains or—unthinkably—second lieutenants, but remembered in the nick of time that when you get this you will have assumed, or at any rate be about to assume, the uneasy crown.

How do you feel about it? I always think there is something exceptionally distinguished about a major. The captains and the kings depart, but not the majors. They stick around. You can't get rid of a major, short of telling him there's no more beer or making him into a lieutenant-colonel—a desperate expedient. As a matter of fact I don't believe they *are* making majors into lieutenant-colonels in this branch of the Service. I don't want to depress you, but have you noticed how, when there's a nice vacancy for a C.O., something comes along to fill it from the apparently inexhaustible resources of the Regular Army? Whereupon all the old T.A. majors raise themselves from their empty dreams of greatness and go and knock the stuffing out of their subalterns for allowing bread in the swill-bins again.

Still, it will be a long time before any idea of getting a regiment comes to trouble you. All you have to think about at the moment is how to be a good major. And there I believe I can help you.

The ordinary officer—by which I mean the kind like myself that will in future be required to salute you—must be courageous, cheerful, humane, good-tempered, enthusiastic, just, firm, understanding, and a leader of men. In addition he must know how to inspect a guard, read a map, put on a gas-mask, present arms, draw up a balance sheet, dig a trench, ride a motor-cycle, apply for leave, destroy parachutists, strip a Lewis gun, decontaminate rubber-boots and dispose of enemy agents and suspected saboteurs. It is a fundamental and profoundly wise principle of the British Army that every officer must be able to do everything that his inferiors in rank have to do, and do it better. If I do not know how to fold an army greatcoat (dismounted pattern), how can I set the feet of my men in the right path?

It follows, my dear Major, that you must be able to decontaminate boots better than I can. Can you? I do not doubt that you are more courageous, cheerful, good-tempered, enthusiastic and firm; but are you sound on the position of the right foot in the About Turn? Can you describe a Botha? Say what you know about the stud on the cocking-piece. Write short notes on (a) Scrim, (b) Crummetts. And when you have finished that, bring out your riding-boots and let me see you decontaminate them.

You must be able to play darts moderately well, but against that you won't, as far as one can see, be expected to appear on parade on a horse. Many officers in the last war sacrificed their chances of promotion because of the fear of being made a fool of by a horse. I know you can ride, but can you talk to a lot of men about *esprit de corps* on a horse that persists in facing the wrong way? Could you emphasize the importance of drying the inside of the face-piece after use, while jogging this way and that, spinning round in circles and occasionally disappearing over the horizon at a fast gallop? Don't be ashamed to admit it if you couldn't. I'm only pointing out that it's a thing you won't be called upon to do.

You may, on the other hand, be required to address advice, instruction, encouragement, and even reproof to large bodies of well-trained women. I don't know. I'm

only guessing. But the papers keep telling me about the training of women for A.A. units, and it just crossed my mind that you might find yourself in command of a Battery of them. Do you know what this would mean? It would mean throwing away that disgusting cap, S.D., for one thing. It would mean altering the style and contents of your contributions to canteen sing-songs and it would necessitate, unless I am gravely mistaken, a certain modification of the offensive manner in which you are at present wont to point out to the soldiery their occasional lapses and defects. You would also, it occurs to me, have to find out how to decontaminate the boots of A.T.S., a quite distinct and difficult operation, for which chivalry is not enough.

What are you going to do about the holes in your shoulder-straps where the upper and middle pips used to be? Some majors keep them there for ages in a modest sort of way, as if to say "See what a very temporary sort of temporary major this is." Others get rid of them in some way (by having new shoulder-straps put on, I suppose, or by filling the holes up with plastic khaki) and are almost immediately transferred to another unit with the rank of captain. That's what I like about second-lieutenancy. They can't muck about with your rank.

There is also the problem of that little bit of red velvet under the crown. It collects dust. Is there a small brush, rank, badges of, majors', cleaning? Or what? You must think of these things. Mere blowing won't do it.

I should have liked to speak to you about men's washing, and running a Battery band, and educational classes, and horticulture, and hair-cutting, and the importance of leave for subalterns, and even about gunnery, but it can't be done. I've got to get out a return showing:

- (a) No. of tin-openers issued to Other Ranks.
- (b) No. of Irishmen with aunts or uncles in Poland.
- (c) No. of (b) without (a).

I don't quite understand (c).

It only remains for me to say that I have the honour to be, Sir,

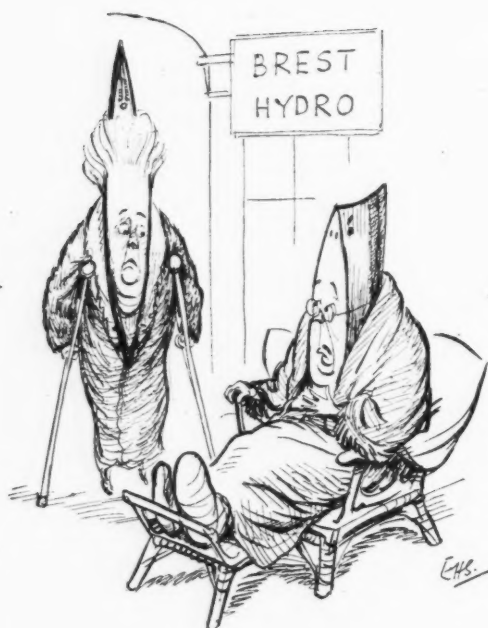
Your obedient servant,

H. F. E.



"I suppose by 'holocaust' you refer to the two dud incendiaries that dropped near your post last Thursday?"





FRAU GNEISENAU. "What, back again! I thought this place didn't agree with you?"

FRAU SCHARNHORST. "No more it does, but the other was worse."

## Letter to the Army

**D**ARLING, I adore you madly and am putting this right up at the beginning because there are a lot of us here, we are going to type you a joint letter to save paper, time and our reasons because we have all seen the only flick I HAVENT E. well you don't count. Darling, Edward looks even differenter in bottle dress than you. i don't e. Goodbye darling for the moment.

this is e now No, it's not it's Lois; hullo. Edward sat & looked at that for about ½ an hr trying to think of something funny; then dashed off with a muttered excuse & was last seen or rather heard hammering; what does this mean? Puzzled, Wirral, Ches. I want to tell you that your wife got 20 cigs from an unlocal paper shop by asking for them in the sort of voice which implied she needed them as opposed to just wanting them (theres gratitude, how are you darling, I forgot to ask, hullo darling) it means i was hammering e. Go away. all r

Hullo you cad, this is Robert. No one seems to have wanted to give you any news so far so I will, surrounded by breathing faces though I aj. Well, about the only bit of news that can be coubted as having happened is how we got from yr dear little rly station to here this aftn, that is those of us who were at thr station to begin with got here and those who were here to benig with got to the station and had to get all the way back again, the point being that no one should get to the station but everyone from it but

in the process things got mixed. Thre is a general opinion that we should write it in verse so Here goes.

### O listen while

Too much effort.

this is e again as another even more general opinion was that if left to do it in prose robert would have neither the intelligence nor the vocab to do such a subject justice so i have been voted. well it began like this. you know where the station is dont you and you know where your house is dont you and you know how there are no buses dont you.

There are masses of buses for those who know how to take them, aren't there darling, hullo darling, I adore you even more madly than I did just then because the post has just been fetchted and you are an ang

this is e again

No, it's Lois. I don't think Edward ought to tell it because most of the laughs were on him THEY WERENT E they were; like the time he got a lift in a govt inspector's car & had to do a round of some 200 miles; not having the moral courage to say he had to get to his destination in time for lunch & would rather walk )a wanton lie i did it on purpose to gather experience and the things i didnt know about hens afterwards could have been written on whatever you write things on e( I think I, this is Lois again, ought to tell you that Edward is not quite so unbracket-minded as appears; but he thinks he is funny, poor lamb. He is, too; but not in any of the ways he thinks he is rather cheap dont you think e

Hullo darling, I have rushed wildly all over the house looking for your fountain pen, no luck so far, are you sure it isn't in any of all those pockets, I will now rush off and look again so goodbye darling.

Hullo, Robert again. Well, no one seems to have given you much news so far, so I SUPpose I shall have to. Well, apart from all that mess about the station, which isnSt really worth writing down, I mean it's the sotr of joke you ought to see the picture of, about the only news is that Lois's revolting and alleged dog has eaten five of your letuces. He didnothing of the kind it was a rabbit it wasn't it was it wasn't it was it wasn't go away I shan't go away I can PROVE it was a rabbit because @ dogs don't eat lettuces unless you chop them up & mix them with everything else b you said yourself it was a rabbit & c my dog has a perfectly good alibi because he was asleep in his little basket all the afternoon YOU AND YOUR DOG MAKE ME SICK E.

Hullo. This is

Dear Junior, he came over all shy darling, he isn't really here, his mother sent him up to borrow something or other back again, how are you darling, I am still looking for the fountain pen and am working very slowly round this room, it seems the most likely

e again Trying to think of something funny: L. I AM NOT E. i am trying to get a paperclip out of your frightful typewriter 444444

your frightful wife is ramming a drawer into my middle hullo darling

Robert here now.

Darling you must have taken it with y

44444 got it but it was a safetypin

As I was saying, Robert hwre now. Well, to give you Darling!!!! found it!!!! under the wireless!!

the only news Darling I'll send it on when I write darling you're likely to get in this letter, w

this is e again that break off represents several seconds awful silence because some woman who it seems is not to be countenancedhas been sighted up the path and is now asking at the front door if anyone is in and it appears that



"Nice wallpaper in that dining-room!"

if we that is i keep on typing we have more chance of not being disturbed in other words less chance of being disturbed because it will sound like someone being busy i dont think much of this plan myself but they are all egging me on not to stop so i wont stop no i wont what shall i say next folks im drying up help help quick all right friends romans countrymen lend me your ears i come to bury caesar not to praise him the quality of mercy is not strained i remember i remember the house where i was born the little window where the sun came peeping in at morn it never came a wink too soon i bet lars porsena of clusium by the nine gods he swore that the great house of tarquin should suffer wrong no more by the nine gods he swore it and named a trysting day i could go on like this for ever and east and west and south and north he bade

phew

Crisis over. This is Lois. I'm signing off.

Robert singing off.

e signing off limp but a hero

Darling I adore you. aw can it e.

lots of love FROM ALL OF US.

o o

## Night Surprise

"THE subalterns," said Sapper Sympton gloomily, "have been deep in conference most of the evening."

We were lying comfortably in our tents, with our heads sticking out under the open brailings, enjoying sweet repose after a busy day, but Sympton's words sent a chill to our hearts. Subalterns in conference, especially in the evening, are an evil omen.

"Another night turn-out, I suppose," groaned Corporal Bayne, "to see how quickly we can dress and get our equipment on, and get over to the P.A.D. trenches. We've done it so often that if there ever is any enemy activity in these parts we simply won't believe it."

"I'm surprised at you," said Sapper Sympton sternly.

"To hear such sentiments from the lips of a full corporal is a disgraceful thing. You should be delighted at the opportunity to show zeal."

"It probably doesn't bother *you* much," said Sapper Purver, "because you haven't undressed, and all you need to do is to lie down in your clothes and just throw on your equipment when the call comes."

Sympton was silent for a moment.

"I admit that I have a slight advantage," he said, "but if you only used your brains these night-stunts need not worry you nearly as much as they do. Why put on full uniform and equipment? It is a dark night, and so long as you are out quickly I don't think they will be particular about whether or not you are fully dressed. In fact if they make any criticism you can reply loftily that you thought speed more essential than sartorial perfection."

For months we have listened to Sympton's ideas, adopted them, and found the flaw too late. But this one seemed good.

"Most of you are sleeping in your shirts," said Sympton, "so it is only a matter of throwing on trousers and boots. Gaiters are obviously superfluous in dry weather and in face of the enemy; socks are even less necessary, since your trousers come down over your boots; lanyards and knives will be no use at all . . ."

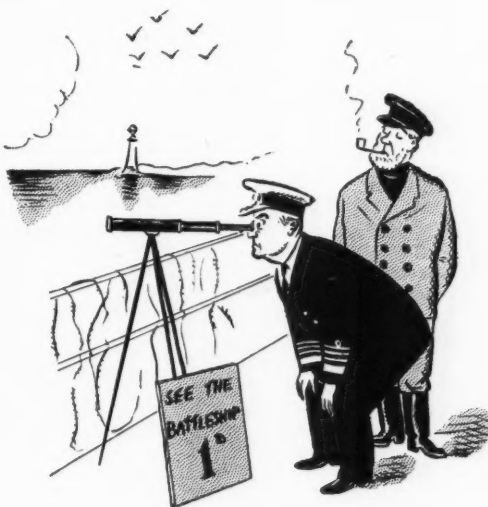
As we had expected, the alarm was sounded soon after midnight, and our section officer appeared in the midst of our tents, noting the times at which each sub-section emerged. We were first.

"Very good, Six sub-section," he said. "It makes me very happy to see such zeal."

The others trooped out, and we formed up in ranks of three. Lieutenant Vague made quite a long speech, praising Corporal Bayne and the rest of us for being out first.

"And as it happens," he said, "this is not merely the usual P.A.D. trench turn-out, but a night-exercise ordered by the Brigadier. We start by marching ten miles to the railway-junction at Bundelcombe . . ."

Sympton educated us on our sockless march with various hints on the care of blisters and bruises. His sudden disappearance into a muddy ditch was attributed by Lieutenant Vague to tripping over the fallen branch of a tree.





*"Come, Karl—goose-step to Granny!"*

## Cherries

I'M glad the cherry season's over.  
 I might have done a dash-and-grab  
 From a taxi-cab,  
 Assaulted a fruiterer or smacked  
 A greengroceress—run amuck, in fact.  
 But let me explain.  
 When cherries appear things happen in my brain.  
 Ever since I was that high  
 I've had a fat eye  
 For a cherry. With the lightest of light hearts  
 I'd rob a poor-box for a pound of white-hearts.  
 Strange—because I don't give a hoot  
 For most fruit.  
 I'm not a man that gapes  
 Voluptuously at hot-house grapes,  
 Or ogles the out-of-reach  
 Velvety-skinned peach.  
 Nor am I one that absorbs  
 Great quantities of rasp and strawbs,  
 Or succumbs  
 To the purple lure of plums;  
 And if ever I'm among felons  
 It won't be for stealing melons—  
 It will be cherries.  
 Not the sort with a high blood-pressure,  
 Ruddy and swarthy, but the fresher,

Paler, delicately-tinted beauties.  
 They are the cuties  
 I fall for—leave me a dish of these, two dishes, all  
 that you've got,  
 And a little hummock of stones will mark the spot.  
 (But there's a snag,  
 Eating them as dessert. I like them out of a bag,  
 In the open. I don't wish to boast,  
 But I still spit a pretty stone, and farther than most.)  
 When cherries are ripe  
 I envy not the opium-fiend his pipe,  
 The bibber of wine  
 His anodyne;  
 The dreams that dwell in cherries are infinitely  
 sweeter;  
 I admit it—I'm a secret white-heart eater.

I'm glad the season's over.  
 To stop  
 In front of a shop  
 And see them there, all glossy and seductive,  
 Was painful (if instructive).  
 So dear and yet so far!  
 So wantonly, Wooltonly dear—that was the jar.  
 It wasn't easy, having to walk around  
 Resisting cherries—at four bob a pound.





ON THE CLIFF EDGE



### WITH THE EIGHT O'CLOCK NEWS!

**E**NEMY activity over this country last night was —. Damage was done to a town in — of England. There were a number of houses destroyed. Civilian casualties were —."

For each and every occasion we try to be prepared to supply the needs of those new victims of enemy aggression; some lose all they possess and need all we are able to give them, and in the meantime hospitals and the fighting forces are eager for the support the PUNCH HOSPITAL COMFORTS FUND bring to them.

Will you please help to supply the most urgent needs? If you have helped us with contributions before will you please help us again? If this is your first introduction to the Fund will you please become a subscriber? Donations will be gratefully acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH HOSPITAL COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.



*"What! No reduced prices for men in uniform?"*

### *Getting it Off One's Chest*

**A**S I suddenly remembered it was Julia's birthday to-morrow I stopped on my way to meet the evening train and went into the stationer's. After wandering among a tempting display of sealing-wax, key-labels and virgin india-rubbers, I got to the Art Department, where pen-wipers are disguised as black cats, and the telephone pencil held by a simpering young woman in pink china.

Among this dainty array were a heap of books. They were small, oblong and padded. The corners were rounded, and the edges of the leaves of shining gold. Across the corner of each was written in a careful and childish hand "Autographs" in inverted commas. I picked one up, smiling a superior smile as I said to myself no child of mine should ask her bosom friends to write their names on its pastel-coloured pages. But as I turned towards the pocket classics, I began to wonder if she hadn't, after all, better get it off her chest. I remembered my

well-conducted childhood, and how much I had longed for a pen-painting set, and coveted a waste-paper basket encrusted with stuffed silk fruit.

And I blushed to think of the lapses I had had since.

I once bought a play-suit and bathing jewellery made of corks when I was going to the West Coast of Scotland; and in my first house had a witch ball, a wooden ship in full sail, and a star lamp. I hoped no one remembered the time when I had taken to writing letters on paper with my name in a circle of violets in the corner. And perhaps there weren't many people I'd ever see again on the occasion when I had blossomed out into singing a few old-world songs at a village concert.

Then I took a delicious country cottage, deciding that London should be left behind for ever. The thatch was Norfolk and the sundial genuine; but the oil stove and the pump were perhaps fortunate, for such was its glamour that it might even now have been sitting on my chest.

Luckily I was not recognized when I met the couple again who were my fellow passengers on that cruise when I had decided that my rôle in life was that of a "little woman."

How often I have thought of taking up the career of a mannequin, a kennel-maid or a nun, considered marrying an Empire-builder or a ballet dancer! Now, I thought, as I stopped at a lovely counter of writing-paper, I was better poised. But wandering back towards the Art Department, my eye was caught by a party of gnomes, destined to disport themselves whimsily in a garden, and before I could say knife, I had one in my hand and was thinking: "They are rather sweet." There was no time to lose. I hurried to the autograph-books, picked out a volume bound in mauve suede crocodile bespattered with gold-dust, and, looking carefully to see that the pages were of the correct sky, rose, helio and cream, I handed it to the girl behind the counter, saying shamelessly: "I think this is the prettiest."





"No, Sab—V for Victoria, our dear ole Queen."

## The New World

Simple Life

THE more glimpses I am given of this new world of ours, the harder I dig in my heels and cry "Whoa!" There is no pattern in the planning. It is slipshod, ramshackle and full of whimsy. This confusion is well illustrated by the unfortunate experience of a friend of mine called Gilbert Harrison.

This Gilbert Harrison was a man who had learnt to take life the easy way. He lived in a pleasant detached villa and his wife enjoyed the comfort of every modern labour-saving device. He travelled first-class every day to his

own business. But the whirligig of Time brings in his revenges even to a man who, in his wisdom, leads the simple life. Gilbert Harrison began to have what his secretary called his "bad days."

When a man is approaching middle age things are apt to go wrong with him. His joints ache on Mondays and his last back teeth become sensitive to an east wind. Fifty little things cause minor discomfort, and when all fifty occur together they lead to a bad day. Gilbert Harrison became worried about them all, but he worried most about

his indigestion. Complaints about his indigestion began to play a prominent part in Mr. Harrison's social conversation, and when a man begins to talk about his indigestion he is headed for disaster.

One day Gilbert Harrison met a man called Pratt who believed that civilization was a menace to human existence. As soon as Mr. Harrison mentioned his indigestion this man Pratt fixed him with a watery eye and told him that it was due to his unnatural way of life. He explained that Nature had intended Gilbert Harrison to spend his time roaming through meadows, clad in little more than a night-shirt, and grasping handfuls of nettles and sorrel for his sustenance. Mr. Pratt spoke in glowing terms of the rich and appetising foods which Nature has so plentifully provided, and which man in his ignorance calls weeds.

"Look at my skin," said this man Pratt, pinching his right cheek between the thumb and forefinger of his right hand and thrusting his face forward.

Gilbert Harrison examined Mr. Pratt's cheek with interest and admitted that his skin appeared to be healthy.

"Healthy!" said Mr. Pratt. "Of course it is. Nothing but healthy natural foods. Herbs, grasses, nettles. Gather them myself every evening. No meat. No alcohol. Never had indigestion in my life."

Gilbert Harrison had indigestion badly at that moment. "Really?" he said. "That's interesting. Nettles, you say?"

"Just ordinary stinging-nettles," said Mr. Pratt. "Boil them up just like any other vegetable. Wonderful taste they've got."

Gilbert Harrison left the office early that day and went home. He told his wife what Mr. Pratt had said, and that he would like to try it. They put on their gardening-gloves and searched the locality. By seven o'clock in the evening they had managed to find sufficient nettles to make a meal.

If Gilbert Harrison had been doubtful about any of Mr. Pratt's statements it was the one in which he had referred to the admirable taste of cooked stinging nettles. Mr. Harrison rather enjoyed his food, and a lifelong experience had taught him that things that are said to do one good generally taste of sawdust and burnt rubber. He was therefore surprised as well as delighted when his wife produced that evening a most succulent dish. He had two large helpings and retired to his armchair in a comfortable frame of mind. It was not until two hours later, when he was about to retire to

bed, that he began to look somewhat disturbed.

"Elsie," said Mr. Harrison. "Did you use all those nettles?"

"Yes, dear," said Mrs. Harrison. "Is anything the matter?"

"No, no," said Gilbert Harrison. "It's just that I'm still a little hungry. I wondered if you had any left."

To any man whose mental balance has not been upset, the fact that he feels hungry at bed-time brings no problems. He can open a tin or dip into a jar. But Gilbert Harrison was leading a simple life and his hunger could not be so easily satisfied. He put on his shoes and his gardening-gloves and went out into the night to gather some more nettles.

Mr. Harrison left the house by the back door and went through his garden, because he believed that the most likely place for nettles was the little lane which ran behind the garden fences of the houses in his road. He stumbled along in the starlight, peering at the growths on either side of him, but he reached the blind end of the lane without noticing anything that remotely resembled a nettle. He had just started on his return journey when he suddenly remembered that one of the houses had been empty for six months. Gilbert Harrison's hope was revived. The garden, he believed, would be full of nettles. He fumbled along the fence until he found the gate, opened it and went in.

The garden which Mr. Harrison entered did not appear to be as abandoned as he had imagined. The lawn seemed to have been cut recently, and the soil newly dug. Nevertheless there was a large patch full of magnificent nettles, and Mr. Harrison quickly gathered a large handful. Clutching them tightly, he retreated to the lane and made his way back to his own house. There was a light in the kitchen which almost blinded him as he opened the door, but he could distinguish his wife as she stood by the gas-cooker.

"I've brought you these," said Gilbert Harrison, holding out the nettles.

And then, as Mr. Harrison's eyes became accustomed to the light, his brain froze in horror and his limbs became paralyzed. For Gilbert Harrison saw that he had entered the wrong house, and that the woman standing at the cooker was not his wife at all but a Mrs. McGilligan. And as Mrs. McGilligan took the nettles from him with a blush and a smile, Gilbert Harrison perceived that they were not even nettles, but exotic-looking purple flowers.

For a few moments, as he stood in Mrs. McGilligan's kitchen stunned and paralyzed, Mr. Harrison experienced a flow of that detached logical thought that is said to be vouchsafed only to the dying. It came to him that the flowers were a species grown by a Mr. Ollernshaw, and that the whole neighbourhood would soon know that they had been stolen. It also came to him that Mrs. McGilligan would want to know why he had presented her with stolen flowers, and that Mrs. Harrison would want to know why he had been presenting flowers to Mrs. McGilligan at all. He realized too that Mr. Ollernshaw would soon be told the name of the man who had stolen his flowers, and that he would come to complain about it just as he was trying to explain the situation to Mrs. McGilligan in the presence of his wife without insulting them both. And just as he had reached this mental dénouement Gilbert Harrison came to life again. The instinct for self-preservation gained the upper hand and he ceased to lead the simple life. Instead he just lived as simply as he could. He extricated himself from Mrs. McGilligan's kitchen by the simple means of walking out of the door. Before he went home he put through two telephone calls.

"My dear," said Gilbert Harrison, as he got into bed that night. "It's a long time since we had a holiday, so I've planned a little surprise for you. We're catching the midday train from Victoria to-morrow for a month in the sun. And don't say you haven't got time to pack because I've arranged for a taxi to call at seven in the morning, and you can buy yourself whatever you want in Bond Street on the way."

"Oh! Gilbert," said Mrs. Harrison.

## Men in the House

TWO second-liuts. p.g. with me  
(Heigh-ho for the mudless stair!),  
Two second-liuts.

In big black boots  
Bachelors both, sing-ho the free,  
Two second-liuts. (two bob and three).

Two second-liuts. who shout and sing  
(Heigh-ho for the bath-mat dry!),  
Two second-liuts.

In nice new suits,  
Who lost their key and had to ring  
(Two second-liuts.) like anything.

Two second-liuts. who bang and slam  
(Heigh-ho for the ash-tray filled!),  
Two second-liuts.,  
The handsome brutes,  
I must confess that I, oh damn  
(Two second-liuts.), their victim am.

### L'envoi

No matter how a batman goes  
To call his officer discreetly,  
With bated breath and on his toes,  
He wakes the sleeping house  
completely. J. G.

### A Thought for To-day

"The fruitage of noble sacrifice would  
sprout, and no man could unsprout it."  
*Tasmanian Paper's Report of Speech.*

### Impending Apology

"That part of Devon which has Exeter, with its virulent and progressive University College, as its centre, has long had the reputation of being one of the finest educational districts in the West."—*West Country Paper.*



"This 'ere queueing-up business is getting beyond a joke."

## At the Play

### "L'ENFANT PRODIGE" (MERCURY)

THIS famous French mime combines the recurring power of a decimal with the no less periodic fascination of moonshine. It is fifty years since its tale of love-lies-bleeding was first seen in London, and now that herb of grace crops up again, very gaily petalled, at the Mercury Theatre in Notting Hill, after a preliminary week in that least commercial building of the old Commercial Road, Toynbee Hall. Toynbee's Theatre stands erect where much has fallen, gay and light and lively amid the grey-ness and gauntness of the place and time. It was an odd and most agreeable result of an eastward journey through stricken streets to find drama in full fig upon an exquisitely painted stage.

MISS ALICE PISK, who had so neatly designed the action and the decoration, had set the story of the *Prodigal* and his disenchantment in his native Paris of 1870. It has been usual, one gathered, to make the boy more of a Pierrot than a person, and to envisage him fluttering round beauty's candle in a cloud-cuckoo-land of no particular place or period. The veteran fanciers of this affair were muttering that it was better habited in such moonshine than in the actual modes of the 'seventies. But for my part I frequently find Pierrot to be a bore and I refuse to believe that the *Phrynette* of the piece ever looked more enchanting than does Miss YVONNE OWEN in her spendthrift finery of the Second Act as now presented.

Mime (without the "panto") has become a rarity. Ballet is the vogue and it is possible that spectators of the *Prodigal's* ardours and endurances will want the gentleman to stop pulling faces and waving his arms—which, since by the rules of the game he may not speak, is all the poor fellow can do—and give us his passionate point of view by leaps and bounds or by gyrating tip-toe in the manner which so

enraptures our balletomanes. The opposite party, who might be called the balletophobes, would rather the lad could break into poetry, and make iambs tinkle to ANDRÉ WORMSER's pleasant score. As it is, the discipline of mime imposes on him the poetry of

honours from the R.A.D.A. and faced with this formidable task, acted with head and heart and hands to the top of his bent and proved himself both athletic and expressive.

Sometimes he seemed to be over-doing the "vibrations" as *Mr. Tappertit* would have called them. The mime is a fragile vessel which too much genuine emotion can topple off the shelf. Miss OWEN, as the jade who torments and betrays the *Prodigal*, had the easier task because she could keep the heart out of it altogether and play serenely on sweet artifice and mannered cruelty. She, also fresh from the Academy, added an astonishing maturity of style to natural freshness, and touched nothing which she did not decorate.

Age, more or less crabbed, had admirable representatives in Miss EUNICE ROGERS and Mr. ARCHIE HARRADINE, while Miss AUDREY TEESDALE and Mr. BOBBY RIETTI were engaging deputies of the great gay world to which *Prodigals* are forever proceeding in primrose Second Acts, only to return in sombre Thirds.

The conclusion? Possibly that mime needs a little orchestra as well as lots of piano. (No fault of Miss MARJORIE REED, who took the key-position admirably.) Also that mime requires rather more fun and rather less misery. The *Prodigal's* tale seemed most to please in its gayer stretches. The Second Act is the high spot. For here the air is as keen and the colour as gay as in a Restoration comedy. I. B.

### Poultry-Keeping Made Easy

From a Government form dealing with the supply of poultry food.

#### "HOW TO USE THIS TABLE"

(1) For any given figure in column (i) above [representing the number of poultry units entered at (A) in column (2) of Part II(b) of Form F.S.R. 14] Columns (ii), (iii), (iv) and (v) above give the corresponding figures to be inserted at B, C, D and E in columns (5), (7), (9) and (11) of Part II(b) of the Form."



SILENT

The Father . . . . . Mr. ARCHIE HARRADINE  
The Mother . . . . . Miss EUNICE ROGERS  
The Son . . . . . Mr. ALAN BADEL

a limited and silent motion, which makes the part a most exacting one even for a player of experience. Mr. ALAN BADEL, just graduated with



SPEECHLESS

Phrynette . . . . . Miss YVONNE OWEN  
The Son . . . . . Mr. ALAN BADEL



## The Hitler-Box

MISS LITTLEMUG'S first reference to her Hitler-box met with something less than perfect understanding.

"You're sure you don't mean the letter-box, dear?" said Aunt Emma, paying, as usual, very little attention. (One has often wondered *what* it is that engages the major part of Aunt Emma's attention. It may be something like the note of a bat—just beyond ordinary human hearing. Or again it may be something to do with Uncle Egbert's mislaid spectacles.)

And Cousin Florence only said that a box for Waifs and Strays was one thing—and hers had stood on the hall-stand at home for months because the baker's little girl had forgotten to call for it—but that a box for anyone like Hitler was quite another.

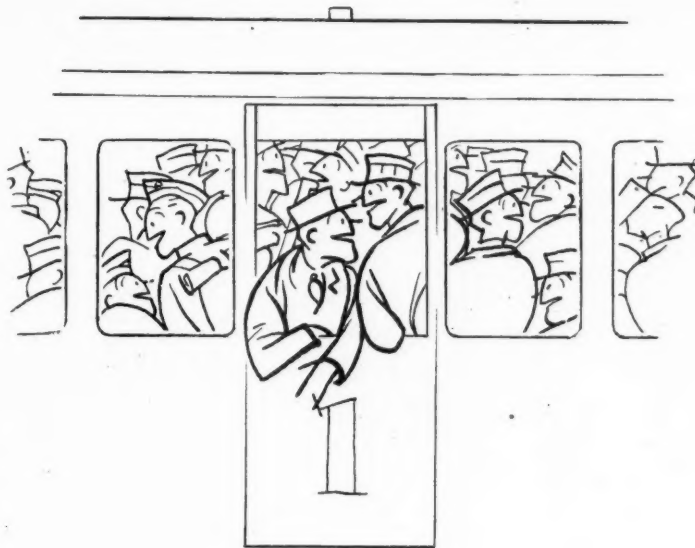
"There isn't anyone like Hitler. Mercifully," Miss Dodge pointed out. She was supported by Miss Plum, who said: "No, indeed; I wonder if anyone could lend me some scissors for a moment."

Mrs. Battlegate, who presides over the Red Cross Working Parties of Little-Fiddle-on-the-Green, made a short but very definitely worded sort of speech, about the spirit of give-and-take being what would eventually win this war for us, and when she had finished it both Miss Pin and Mrs. Pledge handed their scissors across the table. Mrs. Battlegate's own scissors remained in the powerful hand of Mrs. Battlegate.

"Thank you," said Mrs. Battlegate. "Thank you. I think Miss Littlemug was going to tell us something about the war?"

Miss Littlemug repudiated the war and explained that her little idea was of no importance whatever, and it was evident that no one really cared to hear about it, and she begged that no one would pay the slightest attention to anything she might say, now or ever, and she was not in the least upset—it was never her way to take offence—and all she hoped was that no member of the Red Cross Working Party might live to regret, bitterly and unavailingly, having refused to take her advice, simple as it was.

"If it's a collecting box, Miss Littlemug, I am *not* able to support you," said Aunt Emma very firmly. "Positively, I should prefer a flag-day if there's a day left that hasn't got a flag already—because in my opinion, boxes have been overdone. And what was all that about Hitler?"



*"I hear they're talking of taking off the First Class carriages to relieve congestion."*

"Hess, surely. It was Hess who came down in that extraordinary way and got himself so much talked about," Mrs. Pledge pointed out.

For several minutes after that Hess got himself talked about again. In that sort of way Hess may be called irresistible.

One saw that the moment was practically upon us when Miss Littlemug would resign her position in the Red Cross Working Party, thus leading us straight to the more difficult and much more prolonged moment of her eventual return to it.

It was a time for straightforward plain speaking.

"Miss Littlemug," one said, in a frank and outspoken manner, "what is this Hitler-box? Do tell us."

"All I feel, dear, is that one must have a box ready and waiting, day and night, in which to place those absolute *essentials* that one would wish to rescue in the event of enemy action, or invasion, or any sort of sudden departure. Personally, I continually find new things to add."

Everybody seemed, likewise, to find new things to add almost as the words fell from Miss Littlemug's lips.

"Writing materials," said Miss Pin instantly. "And I feel that Mr.

Pancatto would expect the typewriter and plenty of carbons."

Cousin Florence said, in a very depressed tone, that she couldn't even imagine being parted from Pussy, nor Pussy's being parted from her kittens, and that there were also many beloved books, photographs and odds and ends that she treasured.

"Both my husband and I would require a *complete* change of clothing," Mrs. Pledge said, "and I think a cross-word puzzle book would make all the difference to him. I am *not* counting shoes, biscuits, soap, medical supplies and so on."

Everybody else, however, did count them—and counted them aloud, together with many additions that suggested themselves, including a practically life-size reproduction of "Derby Day" that had been presented to General Battlegate's father by the artist.

It was then that Aunt Emma made her contribution to the discussion—if discussion it could be called.

"One of those old-fashioned Imperial trunks," said Aunt Emma thoughtfully.

Quite a silence fell upon the Red Cross Working Party after that.

E. M. D.



"And to think that I go through this every time I have to show you new blokes which two terminals you mustn't touch."

### Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

#### Dæmonic Possession

DR. H. G. BAYNES, author of *Germany Possessed* (JONATHAN CAPE, 16/-), is a medical man who has studied the German psychology and apparently knows a good deal about the mental make-up of that remarkable race. According to his diagnosis their condition is one of dæmonic possession, and HITLER is the shaman or primitive medicine man who has gained a magical ascendancy over the national mind by playing the rôle of medium to the German unconscious. This specially cultivated part of magician has practically obliterated his human personality. He has become a sort of weather-cock, sensing and responding to the unspoken mind of the crowd. Accordingly, "when dealing with the FUEHRER, we must abandon all ordinary ideas of good faith and learn to regard him merely as a medium. He has trained himself to play upon the German's chief weakness—spiritual intoxication. To this end he holds himself aloof from all ordinary human intercourse, only coming forward into the limelight, an emotional virtuoso, for the sake of producing a dramatic impression. "His expressionless, frowning face, his weak, mechanical handshake, his piercing but unfocussed gaze"—all these are symptoms of his disease. Dr. BAYNES analyses his patient very thoroughly, sometimes with unnecessary repetition, tracing the influence on his inflammable imagination of a possible Jewish parentage, the Wagnerian German myth, the Aryan absurdity, the repressed individuality of his early days. Dr. RAUSCHNING supplies an introduction and several quotations from *Hitler Speaks*. The book is also adorned with a *Punch* cartoon—that displaying HITLER's dual personality as *Jekyll* and *Hyde*—and disfigured by photographs of HIMMLER and HITLER back to back. The face of the former should be sufficient excuse for calling in the hangman immediately.

### England, Yesterday and To-day

It is odd that Sir JOHN SQUIRE, in providing an otherwise sympathetic preface to an anthology of prose descriptions of England, should fail to take exception to the costly English habit of making a pile in the town and retiring with that pile to the country. This characteristic manœuvre is equally responsible for a grimly utilitarian attitude towards the town and a playboy attitude towards the country—a conjunction of evils that has rendered the town unlovely and the country unproductive. In compiling *The English Scene* (BATSFORD, 12/6), Mr. F. A. WALBANK starts in the England of QUEEN ANNE with "The Manor" and "The Village" and proceeds to "Farm or Factory"—thus summarizing very neatly the trend of national life until to-day. He introduces each series of quotations with an illuminating little essay—"Landscape" and "The Road" are particularly good; and he arranges his extracts so cunningly that the change from ADDISON's ideal squirearchy to the snobs of THACKERAY and GALSWORTHY is felt rather than seen. His illustrations—especially his Georgian conversation-pieces—are excellent; and his claim that in "the English way of life" our "interests belong to the soil" is a text on which the whole book is, in a sense, a commentary.

### Good Food in War-Time

In the matter of war-time house-keeping—always a menace to the half-hearted and a rather enjoyable challenge to the enterprising—Mr. AMBROSE HEATH goes from strength to strength, and his *More Kitchen Front Recipes* (BLACK, 2/6) is a much better book than its predecessor. If he fails to make his clients more soup-minded it is not for want of an excellent series of potages, which for the peasants who sponsored most of them are a meal in themselves. He dodges topical difficulties with commendable adaptability. You have no fat for pastry? Turn your "Squab Pie" into a hot-pot. Your meat ration has petered out? Why not a vegetable roast with apple sauce? He boldly transfers a tea-time dainty to that difficult pudding-course,



"And this is Adolphus Wycherley Pontifex not listening to it."



#### THE GUARDS' STANDARD

*Facetious Instructor.* "DON'T BE AFRAID TO BANG YOUR 'ANDS ON THEM BUTTS; YER WON'T BREAK 'EM. MAKE A NOISE LIKE THE GUARDS—WHEN THEY SLAMS THE CARRIAGE-DOORS."

*Bert Thomas, August 21st, 1918*

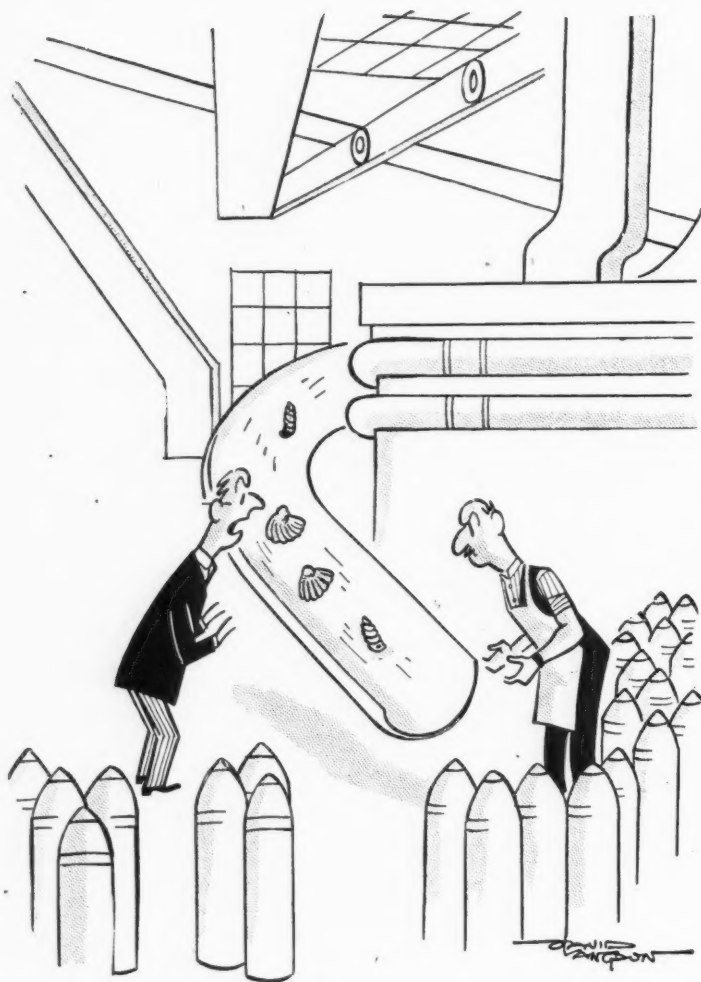
and "Drop Scones" become "Scotch Pancakes." He tells you how to make biscuits, how to pickle nasturtium seeds, and though perhaps some of his "Unusual Vegetables" are more bother than they are worth, his plea for sugar-peas and more sorrel is extremely sound. Vitamins are relegated to a final chapter which is mainly valuable as suggesting that orange juice is not really necessary for babies or anyone else.

#### Conducted Tour

Mr. SACHEVERELL SITWELL begins his book, *Valse Des Fleurs* (FABER, 5/-), graciously: "There will be a ball in the Winter Palace to-night. We invite anyone who would see St. Petersburg in its snow and gilt to spend the day with us. It is at present a winter morning early in 1868." Those

who accept his invitation and wander, also, through the Tsarkoe Selo ("country Palace of the Sleeping Beauty"), with its hall of lapis lazuli and parquet of ebony inlaid with mother-of-pearl, its pilasters of violet glass, need only spend an hour, for the book is a very little one. All the same a great deal of Russian history is crammed into the pages. We are allowed to see TSAR ALEXANDER II reviewing his troops (including the Pavlovski—a snub-nosed regiment founded by the mad PAUL I, who liked to see his own features reproduced), to glance for a moment at the hideous vision of the peasants, and to enter the Winter Palace in time for the ball. There is no word of conversation, but Mr. SITWELL uses words like notes of music to enchant us. He is wise not to delay us too long, for when the glitter and intoxication are over most of his guests will be glad to look at grey stone or bricks again.





"Great heavens, Wilcox, sabotage!"

### We, the Enemy

THE Platoon Commander said to me, "Go into that wood and hide. You are five German soldiers."

I felt that my value was being underrated. "Only five?" I asked.

"Five is plenty," he answered solemnly, and explained that I (but I suppose he meant "we") had just parachuted from a plane. "The rest of the Platoon is going to round you up," he said.

On the way to the wood I felt the importance of our getting to know one another. "Hans," I said, "do you

know Fritz? Max, this is Hermann: and that chap over there is Rudolf." We all started at that and looked at Rudolf with distrust—you never know, when a man has a name like that. But there was no time for a study of our characters. We climbed into the wood and lay down near its edge, watching for the hated English. Soon we saw them—little groups, hedge-crawling towards us. Fritz thought it was time we moved; Max was sure we ought to stay and fight it out: the voting went three to two in favour of slipping away, so we got down into a water-course.

Some of the English were already in the wood and we all five held our breath while they were near us. A little further on, a path crossed the water-course by means of a little bridge, and Fritz declared pessimistically that Hermann (who suffered from a family characteristic) would never get under it. He did indeed stick half-way, but that was lucky because a patrol went over it while we were below. It was a narrow bridge, with far too little room for five men beneath it, and we felt certain that Rudolf's head would show on one side and Max's feet on the other. But we thought of the Fuehrer and compressed ourselves, like one man, and that danger passed.

A moment later, however, we were seen. A whistle blew and an umpire came along. "You lose two men," he told me. "Which two?" I asked, for if Hermann went we could move a lot faster, and Fritz was displaying a dangerous defeatism. But the umpire said, "I don't know what you are talking about. Get back now, and try another route."

Hans, Max and Rudolf crept back. The wood now seemed alive with English patrols, and we felt we were in a tight corner. But the ever-to-be-relied-upon Max had an inspiration. Instead of keeping together, he said, we must separate. It was an excellent idea: for when a few minutes later I was ambushed I said to the corporal, "You haven't a chance. Hans and Rudolf are behind you." He looked round, and then asked what on earth I was talking about. "There are three of us," I explained. "There is only me here, so the other two must be somewhere else. If they are somewhere else, why shouldn't they be behind you? And if they have got behind you, they will have killed you."

A little doubtfully, he admitted the logic of this. "But we've killed you," he insisted.

I agreed that that was so.

"Then the show is all over," he said.

"Oh, no," I retorted. "At least, I don't think so. I was Fritz, Hermann, Max, Rudolf and Hans. Fritz and Hermann were killed ten minutes ago, and I became only the other three. Then we separated, and I was only Max. You have killed him—me, that is—but Rudolf and Hans have killed you. The question is, where are they now? They can't rejoin me—Max, that is—because I'm dead. Nobody has killed them. But they don't exist without me—and now I don't exist. So . . ."

Soothingly, the corporal told me to come and sit down in the shade.

## Cupboard Love

I AM disappointed in Edward Plummer.

It is thirteen years ago, almost to the day, that I first met him. I had just brought home my Nero Twelve Fibre Saloon, purchased for £27, which was considered cheap for a secondhand car in 1928; apart from a smell of scorching leather, and a muffled crashing noise from under the back seat, it had behaved perfectly. I had been standing in the drive, drinking it in. Then, when I gave the starting-handle a swing before driving it into its shed, the neighbourhood rocked to a tremendous explosion and I was hurled obliquely backwards, the handle revolving in my hand like an Arsenal supporter's rattle.

Tremendous explosions still had their public in those days, and a large part of it came running up excitedly. When I had shaken them off, assuring them that it was nothing, I saw that one of them had remained. He was the man I was later to know as Edward Plummer, and he was feverishly removing parts of the Nero's engine, smearing himself with black grease from head to foot.

As he worked he bombarded me with motor-engineer's jargon, quickly discovering that I knew nothing of motor engineering and lacked the will to learn; the more he learned of my ignorance, the more fanatically enthusiastic did he become, utterly absorbed in my motor's idiosyncrasies. I thought at first that he was a man who had had all his life been car-starved, but when I suggested this to him he gave a greasy laugh; he was lying between the front wheels at the time, having discovered that putting the gear-lever in the reverse position caused all the lights to come on.

"Cars?" said he, peering at me through the nearside wheel—"I've had hundreds. Only got two now. No fun in cars any more. Unless . . ."

"Unless what?"

"Unless they're Nero Twelves," he said.

Feverishly tugging wires and unscrewing nuts, he went on to explain that my motor was in the nature of a quaint survival. "No-other-car—" he emphasized each word by an upward kick at the engine—"could make a tremendous explosion like this one did; no other car could have its wheels fly off, its coachwork warp, its whole structure blow up and fall apart like this wonderful, this beautiful Nero

Twelve. You'll see." He got up and operated the gears. There was a sharp crack, and the rear light fell off. "Not right yet," said Edward Plummer, apparently with relief; "I'll drop round to-morrow, may I?"

"Please do," I said.

That was thirteen years ago. Since that day, Edward Plummer has worked on my motor without intermission, only leaving it untended when he himself has bought a new one. Since 1928 he has had a Stumpage Silent Eight, a Pandick Sleuth, two Fosdyke Sevens and a Bomphill Flashing Fourteen. All proved a disappointment to him; the entertainment they provided in the way of mechanical and structural defects was almost negligible considering their cost. None of them kept him away from the Nero for more than three days.

One day when he was reassembling the offside door, which had taken to swelling up in a painful tumour whenever I wound down the window, I asked him why he didn't go in for a secondhand car or two himself—something to give him value for money in the way of leaking radiators, jammed gears, temperamental carburettors, inflammable brake-linings, disintegrating luggage-grids, and so forth. He shook his head. He said my Nero had spoilt him for other motors, and

he didn't suppose there was another Nero Twelve on all the roads of England. The firm had only turned out a dozen or two before filing its petition.

I felt quite moved by his devotion.

Then came the war, and one evening Edward approached me with a grave face. He had warned me before that the era of adjustments and repairs was giving way gradually to one of replacements and makeshifts. At last he had met his Waterloo, in the shape of an auxiliary sprocket-trip—I think that's what it was. The problem of replacement seemed insoluble.

Together we surveyed the poor hulk. It looked the same as it always had—squarish, high-built, snub-nosed, its mudguards aloof from its narrow wheels. It was hard to think that it would never again detonate into lusty and eccentric virility.

"Try to think of something, Edward," I said.

"I'll try, you know that." But he was clearly in despair.

I did not see him for a month. I waited patiently, for I had faith in him. Then, last Sunday week, at my breakfast, I heard what I took to be an unusually low air-battle overhead. Only for a second was I deceived—and then, hurling my coffee-cup away from me, I rushed from the room,



"An ex-glassblower—THEREFORE good lungs—THEREFORE he must join my bugle class. That's the commissioned mind for you!"

only to collide with Edward Plummer, rushing in.

"You've done it!" I cried.

"Patience, patience!" replied Edward, and a minute later we were in our old familiar seats behind the old familiar bonnet, with Edward at the old familiar wheel.

Breathlessly he explained to me that the Nero was only running by courtesy of a piece of copper-wire which he had moulded into the semblance of an auxiliary sprocket-trip. It had taken him a month to do, working day and night, and would only carry us five miles. But that five miles, Edward panted, would get us to the place.

"Place?" I hiccupped, bounding in my seat. But he would say no more.

For ten wild minutes we raged along, until suddenly, in a squalid street, we flew off to the right through a gap in the houses, passing beneath a board which said in uneven characters, "DANDY'S DUMP PICK OVER AT YOUR LEISURE." There was a burst of artillery-fire from beneath our feet, and we rocked to a standstill. The auxiliary auxiliary sprocket-trip had only just kept faith.

Edward Plummer gazed before him in rapture, sighing great sighs. To me the place looked nothing. It seemed to be a couple of acres of bombed machinery which had been rained on and allowed to rust to death. The cinder-strewn clearing was thickly dotted with tangled mounds of metal, stretching away on all sides. But Edward had begun to mutter to himself, like a man in a beautiful dream.

"All these years," he murmured—"and I never knew about it. Radiators! Carburettors! Axles! Cylinder-heads! Wheels! Tyres! and bodies! Man, look at the bodies!"

He was referring to a number of objects which I had at first taken to be cars. Now I saw that they were mere shells; their engines were gone, the doors stripped away, their wheels vanished. Brockley Coupés, Cracknell Flying Sixteens—they had been lovely and pleasant in their lives, but now the rabid hordes of spare-part hunters had run over and through them like armies of red ants, seeking what they might devour. They were at it even as I watched. Jaunty young men in film-gangster hats were poking about amongst the wreckage with their smart, cheap canes, or turning over the rusted mounds with their patent-leather shoes.

Edward noticed them too. Suddenly he had come out of his trance and was running off to a wooden hut at the far end of the place.

"Xil'ry sprocks?" said the man who lounged in the doorway with a proprietary air. "Whaffor?" He wore a silver-grey suit with a plum stripe, and on to his shapely trouser-tops was grafted what seemed to be an abortive double-breasted waistcoat. "Try past the plug pile," he said when Plummer told him—"but I've two chaps in reg'lar for Nero Twelve parts. Reckon you'll be unlucky. Brothers, they are."

For two hours we went at the pile like dogs digging, hurling out between our legs fragments of magnetos, lighting-sets, door-handles, radiator-fans. Then we stopped. There was no

pile left. We looked at each other in despair.

Turning, we made towards the permanently immobilized Nero Twelve Fibre Saloon.

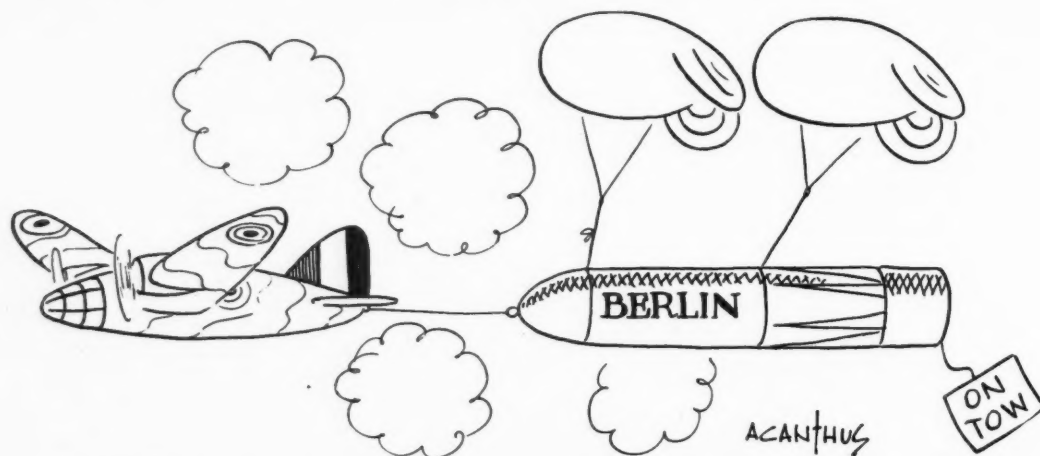
It had gone. In its place was a smallish, squarish, fibre-built house, flush with the ground. There was nothing inside it—not even seats. The red ants had swarmed over it while our backs were turned.

I looked up. But Edward too had gone. Presently I saw him, standing by the gate, gesticulating wildly to two young men in curly-brimmed hats. Before the trio moved briskly away and out of sight I noticed that the young men resembled each other facially as well as in other respects. I made my way home on foot, sadly—and yet not too sadly. Edward was on the trail. He would arrange everything. I resigned myself to waiting—waiting for the familiar explosions and the sound of Plummer's triumphant voice.

But they never came.

I have only seen him once since then. The other day I got off a bus at the corner of Porteous Street; and from a public-house yard a voice was speaking—a voice muffled by engine-oil and bits of rag. "No—other—car . . ." it was saying. I stopped to look. At first I thought it was my Nero Twelve; the same squarish outline, the same snub-nose and narrow tyres—but a number-plate altogether different. And two young men in curly-brimmed hats were bending down, looking underneath, admiringly.

Yes, I am disappointed in Edward Plummer.



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